

Durable RICHES.

Two Brief ^{Barneard} DISCOURSES,

Occasioned

By the Impoverishing Blast of Her-
ren, which the Undertakings of
Men, born by SEA and LAND,
have met withal.

The One, handling, The true
Cause of LOOSING;

The other, giving; The true
Way of EARNING.

By Cotton Mather.

*Mors tua est, panca amittere, ut majora
Luceris Tert.*

*Eiusmodi Ores Convanaude, que navi strabla
fimur. Exitate p fuit.*

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at his Shop neare a P. the Old Meet-
ing House. 1693.



Preface.

IT has been Complained, not only that Christian Charity, but also that Moral Honesty, is too generally neglected by Men, in their Employing of those *Temporal Estates*, wherewith God in his Providence has Be-trusted them. And it may be observed, That the too little Believed Providence of God most wilily and justly Ordering all our *Temporal Affairs*, has been Chaitizing this Unfaithfulness in our *Stewards*, with such multiplied Losses, as often argue somewhat more than a mere Display of Divine Sovereignty, in their Infliction. Upon the occasio: heretofore, Two brief Sermons that have been Preached on our Country-Lecture, are now offered unto the publick : the presumption of which offer, I do not go to excuse, as Authors fondly use to do, with the *Impunity* of Friends, for no number of my Friends has ever, that I know of, Importuned this Publication : but the Offer is made, briefly, Because I think my Neighbours bad need be Told of these things, whether they ask e. b. Told of them or no. May the Blessing of Heaven, accompany these poor Essays, To do good unto all.

COTTON MATHER



THE
True Cause of
Loofing.

Hig 1 7. 9.

*This saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your Ways.
Ye looked for much, and, it came to little;
and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it.*

IT was a true but a sad Report, which a Prophet once gave, concerning the Times, when the Concerns of Religion were wilfully disregarded, in a Chron. 13. 5, 6 In those Times, there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in; for God vex'd them with all Adversity. And I think, to Repeat those words would be at the same Time, exactly to Report the Characters of the Black Times that are come upon our selves. There is indeed, a dreadful variety of Adversity, every Year

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vexing of us; but among all our *Vexations*, there is a special Remark to be put upon those *Loses* which attend us, in our Estates; and those *Loses* are principally occasioned by the want of *Peace* so them that are Going out, or Coming in. An Infallible Expedient for the Preventing, or the Reparing of these *Loses*, would intallibly be welcome to us all; and I now pretend, unto more than one such Expedient. The great Use of *Guard Ships* and *Courses*: and the yet greater use of *Insurance Offices*, Established upon good Foundations for this purpose, with Methods to stop Fires, or cure Blasts, hitherto unpractised, I do somewhat know; but I am now to show unto you, *A more Excellent Way.*

There were five *Loses* that befel the People of God, who having obtained from the King, a Good Charter, with a Good Governor, Empowring them to Settle a Good Order both in Church and State, among themselves, too soon laid aside the Holy Designs which they had begun upon. The *Loses* which thus Crepled the Body of this People as well by *Loss*, as by *S-s*, in the *Insanity* of their Plantation, must needs be very Exacting. Their Condition is in these words Express'd unto them, *Ye looked for much, and to it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it.* It seems they met with such *Loses* in their Wyses of Living, whether by *Tillage*, or by *Taffick*, that they could not Thrive in any of their Undertakings. But the God of Heaven, ver-

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ry graciously sent one of His Ministers, to debate with the people about their Losses, & Exhort them and invite them to Repent of the Sins, which had been the Moral Causes of those Disasters.

Our Haggai was one of those Ministers; and, as 'tis noted by one of the Ancients, because this Haggai was but a Tung Man, Let any therefore despise his Works, he came with a very Divine Authority; he demands Attention, with a doubtless, *This saith the Lord of Hosts;* and, if the Message come from, *The Lord of Hosts,* who dare do any other than Attend unto it? The Errand upon which our Prophet here comes unto this People, is, briefly, to direct them unto a way, how they might both find out the Cause, and obtain the End, of all the Calamitous Losses, which had overtaken them. And that i- my Errand unto *Ye* this Day, in the Discharge whereof the Text now Read will be very Serviceable.

The CASE before me is,

How shou'd we Approve our selves under the Losses wherewith Almighty God visits us, in our Estates; and how may we Improve those Losses unto Spiritual and Eternal Gains.

In Answer to a Case, which I suppose, few or none, can count unsatisfactory, there are these things to be offered.

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I. The first Counsil proper for them that have met with *Losses*, is that which we have, Repeated in our Context here. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your Wayes.* Consideration under our *Losses*, is as needful as ready a way, to the *Sanctification* of those *Losses*. And there are especially two things to be there-upon Considered.

First, When we have met with *Losses*, we are to Consider the *Hand* from whence those *Losses* come upon us. Briefly, VVe are to Consider the *Hand* of God in all our *Losses*. It was well Considered and Confesed, by the Holy Job, when he had Lost a fair Estate, and there were *Sabaeans & Chaldeans* as well as more Natural Accidents, among the Authors of his *Losses*, in Job 1. 21. *It is the Lord that has taken away.* VVe shall be very *Fretful* under our *Losses*, if we are not very *Thoughtful* under them. Yea, but our *Thoughts* will only increase our *Frets*, if they should only be Employed upon *Second Causes*. This is the *First Rule* for us under our *Losses*; Let us acknowledge a *VVife*, and a *Just God* as the *First Cause* of all. It has been sometimes the Good Speech of a *Good Man*, I can say, any thing well

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well at the Hand of God. As for our Losses, they will all Prove well if we can take them well; but now, behold how That is to be attained. Let us consider, what we are told, in Deut. 8. 18. *Thou shalt Remember the Lord thy God, for 'tis he that gives thee power to get Wealth.* And then, Let us Consider, That when we loose Wealth, we must Remember the Lord our God; for 'tis he who denies us the power of keeping our Wealth. Perhaps our Losses may arise from the Fraud or Force of our Enemies; but let us Consider, It was our God that let Loose those Devourers upon us. 'Tis possible, Unhappy Casualties have procured us our Losses; but let us Consider, 'Twas by the Dispposal of our God, that such Inconveniences came to pass. It may be partly for this Reason, that our Prophet here once and again mentions unto the People, *The Lord of Hosts*, as concerned about their Losses; They were the Hosts of the Lord, that were the more immediate and visible Instruments of their Losses; yea, but those Instruments were but Instruments; and says the Prophet, *It is the Lord of Hosts himself that commanded this Armies to Fall upon your Estates.* VVhatsoever may be our Losses, and from what Quarter soever

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they spring, I beseech you speak not a word of any Bad Fortune, in the Business. 'Tis only for Pagans to ascribe their Losses unto *Chance*, or a blind Original. Consider every Loss as ordered, not by *Chance*, but by God; even by that God who has Numbered all our Hairs; that God, without whom not a Sparrow falleth; that God who does the Evil that is done in the City. There was a pious Widow once, that met with sore Losses in her Concerns; but you shall now hear her Opinion about the true Original of all those Losses; in Ruth 1. 21. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again Empty; the Lord hath Testified against me, and the Almighty hath Afflicted me. Well Thought on! 'Tis the Lord Almighty that Empties us, by all the Losses that come upon us. Mark what I say; A man will never be a Loser by any of his Losses, except he be Impatient under them. Now, the best Antidote against Impatience is, to Consider, 'Tis the Will of God, that I should meet with such Losses as I do.

Secondly, When we have met with Losses, we are to Consider the Ground for which those Losses come. The God of Heaven sent one Wasting Plague after

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after another upon the poor Jews, till at last they lost all they had in the World; but then said He, in Ezek. 14. 23. *Ye shall know that I have not without a Cause, done all that I have done in it, saith the Lord.* Our Losses are usually the fruit and sign of Gods Quarrels. Ordinarily our God is managing of some Controversy with us, when He cautions us to *Loose* those things that were Comfortable to us. [We may alude unto Ezra 7. 26.] It would be a profitable thing for us to *Loose* what is Comfortable, if we might be by right thereby to Mourn for, and to Flee from our Sins, and to Humble ourselves before God, with a deep Repentance. It becomes us then under our Losses, to Consider, *What is the Cause of such Dispensations, and to Pray,* as in Job 10. 2. *Show me wherefore thou contentest with me.* In our Text, the Lord makes a, *Why?* upon the Losses of the People. Truly, it becomes us also to use a, *Why?* upon our Losses. Put the Question, *Why am I thus? Why will not God permit me to Enjoy what he has bestowed upon me?* We are here informed, That our Prayers are to be considered, when our Losses come in upon us; it seems, that in the judgments of our

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own *Ways*, we are to Look for the Reasons of our Losses. Particularly, To begin with what lies before us;

First, Under our *Losses* we may do well to Consider, Whether it be not Because of mine *Hire*: but it is w^t. taib the *Lord of Hosts*; and yo run every man unto his own *Hire*. The Neglect of the Ordinances Administered in the *House of God*, is here signified as the Rite of those *Leys* which b^tell the *Jews* of old. God would no n^t their *Hands*, because they would not Re-Emit His. They would not give *Food*, *Mole*, & therefore God we i^t not have *Thurs* to flourish. They did not every thing too *Much* for the *Hire* of God, and so God said every thing was too *Good* for theirs. There is now a twofold miscarriage, after which we should by our *Losses* be made the worse. We should Consider, whether we have duly Attended the Ordinances in the *House of God*. It was Enacted, in Exod. 23. 24. *Thrice a year, shall your Un Children appear before the Lord G d; Then shall no man desire thy Land.* If we Loose the Profits of our *Land*, pray, Let us then Enquire, Do we go up so much as once a Year, to the *Gospel-Festival* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*? The first Planters of this Country,

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Country, had a glo ious Experiment of it; That as long as men were mostly concerned about a Room in the House of God, and about Preparing for, and Approaching to the Ordinances of that House, they prospered wonderfully in their Undertakings; but since that Church Work has been so shamefully cast off by, A Generation of ~~sinful~~ men Risen up in our Fathers stead; and since that instead of Desiring this one thing, to dwell in the House of the Lord, he cier Cy has been after Workly Accommodations; Men do but Loose on all hand's, and miserably go down the wind almost all the Country over. It has been said by our Lord, Seek first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you. You then that find All these things Taken from you, may do well to Consider, Have I duly sought the Kingdom of God, by joining my self in a Sacred Fellowship, with the People of that Kingdom? God makes us to Loose the things that were to furnish our Tables; why? Because the Dainties Exhibited upon His TABLE are despised with us. Again, we should Consider, whether we have duly supported the Ordinances in the House of God. What notable Assurances did

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the Lord give, in Mal. 3. 9, 10, 11. Ye are Cursed with a Curse, for ye have Robbed me. Bring ye all the Tithes into the Store house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not Open you the Windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be Room enough to receive it; and I will Rebuke all Frowns for your sakes. So many Distractors caule us to Loose our Stores: It may make us Enquire, whether we have not pi. ch'd in what Concerns the Stores that are necessary to keep the House of God trim & shining. 'Tis impossible that the Occurrences belonging to the House of God should be carried on without Charges; and every man to whom God has given any of His Talents, does owe something proportionable, for the maintaining of those Charges. The Open Windows of Heaven are to let fall a pour of Blessings on them that are most Open banded in such a Party. Whereas, I can tell of a County in the world, where the Unavowable Charges of the Gospel, have been accounted the heaviest of Burdens, by very many of the Inhabitants; and at length, God gave them to see, that by his Frowns only upon One Expedition, He could in a few Weeks make them loose more than would have

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have honourably Defray'd all the Ecclesiastical Expences in the Land for several Years together. There needs not much of Geography to find such a Countrey ; plainly, 'tis, *My Own*. It is among the Oracles of VVisdom, *There is that withholds more than is meet, and it tendeth to Poverty.* To withhold from the Service of God, and of His Truths, & VVays, those *Quirents* which are Challenged by Him, who does give us *All* that we have ; *This is to withhold more than is meet.* Let us then Consider, *Is not my Sacrilege the cause of my Poverty?* We Loose what we have, when we go to Keep what we should not. But,

Secondly, Under our Losses, we may do well to Consider, Whether we never made *Idols* of those things, whereof we now undergo the Losses. VVhen the Jews were guilty of notorious *Idolatries*, this was the Judgment of Cod upon them for those Idolatries, in Ezek. 16 27. *Pebold, I have stretched out my Hand over thee, and I have diminished thine Ordinary Food.* As for us, 'tis clearely one sort of *Idolatry* which we are most prone unto ; even that whereof the Apostle speaks, *Covetousness, which is Idolatry.* When our Hearts come to be Inordinately

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nately set upon things here below, then 'tis that by one *Loss* after another, those things are *Diminished* unto us. To *Love* any of these things extreamly, is the way to *Loose* that thing certainly and speedily. Let any *Guard*, be overvalued, and it won't be long before that *Guard* shall be withered. A miserable Indian at *Mexico* once very solemnly held up a piece of *Gold*, saying, *Bebold, this is the Spaniard's God!* Even so it may be said about the *Cash*, or *Shop*, or *House*, or *Ship*, or *Field* of many a man; *There's the God of that man.* The man does more depend upon those things, for a Subsistence, than upon the Almighty God Himself; The man will forget God, and all the Works and Laws of Religion, rather than abate of his raving pursuit after these things. This 'tis to make *Idols* of them! Well then, says the Blessed God, Since *this man will make Idols of these things, they shall be Idols indeed!* Now an *Idol* you know is *Nothing* at all. So, we *Loole* all, till all come to *Nothing*. It was laid in Prov. 23. 5. *Wilt thou set thine Eyes upon that which is not? For Riches certainly make themselves Wings.* Riches are a *Line*, *Gay, Speckled Bird*; but it is a *bird in the Bush*, not a *bird in the Hand*; and

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and it is our setting our Eyes too much upon it, that causes its Flight from us, that is, our Loss of it.

Thirdly, Under our Losses we may do well to Consider, Whether our Unthankfulness and Unfruitfulness under our Enjoyments, have not given much of Reasonableness unto our Losses. All that we have, is but a *Loan* from the Great God unto us. Now, if we be so Unthankful, that we will not particularly and affectionately Recognize the Kindness of God unto us in such a *Loan*, it is not very Reasonable that we should come to have a *Loss* instead of a *Loan*? Is it famous Threatning of God, in Deut. 28. 47, 48. Because thou servest not the Lord thy God, with Joyfulness, and Gladness of Heart, for the Abundance of all things; therefore thou shalt Serve thine Enemies in Hunger and in Thirst, and in Nakedness, and in the want of all things. It seems, we come to the Want, and the Loss of our Former Abundance; Why? Because we do not Serve God with a due Thankfulness of Heart, in and for that Abundance. Let me put this unto the Consciences of my Loosing Neighbours! When the Emperour Bajazet had in one Day Lost

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no less than a mighty Empire & Glory, Tamerlane, who took him Captive, seriously ask'd him, *Syr*, Did you ever yet give *Thanks* to Almighty God, for putting so great a part of His World into your Hands; whereto the Turk answered, No, in Truth I never thought of that. And the Tartar then reply'd, Ungrateful Wretch! then wonder not, that thou hast Lost it all! Truly so, Let many of us, that have Lost much of the VWorld, be asked seriously, Did you ever give Express, Hearty, frequent *Thanks* to God, for His bestowing these things upon you? 'Tis to be doubted, that we should be found lamentably defective in this Ingenuity; and so you see, the Cost of this Ingratitude. Moreover, All that we have, is the *Means* of Cultivation Employ'd by the Great God upon us. We are *Trees* in the Vineyard of God; our Delights are part of the Husbandry, or the *Means* wherewith He Labours, to fetch some of His Praies out of us; and if we are Unfruitful after all, 'tis but Reasonable that we should be deprived of those *Means*. It was threatened in Hol. 2. 8, 9. She did not know, that I gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and multiply'd her Silver and Gold; Therefore will I Return, and I will take them

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them away. Don't we know that as what we have, is the *Gift* of God, so it must be all used for the *Praise* of God? Know we not, that our *Corn*, and *Wine*, and *Oyl*, and *Silver*, and *Geld*, is to be Laid out only so as may be for the Glory of God? If we don't know this, we shall know that He will *Take* it, and we must *Loose* it all. They that are *Unprofitable Servants*, do quickly hear their Doom, *Take the Talent from him, saith the Lord!* The *Unfaifbful Stewards* are quickly call'd upon, *Surrender what is in your Hands!* Have we *Lost* considerably? Let us then think with our selves, *How we have us'd what we have Lost.* It may be that what should have Nourished our Devotion, and our Charity, has been made but a *Fuel* for our Lust. It may be that our Plenty has been Abused unto Gluttony, Drunkenness, Pride, and the *Superfluity of Naughtiness*. No wonder then, if the Jealous God, should say upon it, *I le truſt them no longer with my Goods!* When *David* could say of *Nabal*, *In vain have I kept all that this Fellow has*, he was presently for making him *Loose* all he had; thus, if our God must say, *In vain have I let that Fellow have so much of the World*, what is like to follow,

16 The true Cause but a quick Ejection out of all?

Fourthly, Under our Losses, we may do well to Consider, How we Got what we have Lost. It is a most memorable passage, in *Jer. 17. 11.* As a Partridge sitteth on Eggs, and hatcheth them not, so be that gettesth Riches, and not by Right, shall Leave them in the midst of his Dayes, and at his End shall be a Fool. Many a man has been such a Fool, as to augment his Riches in some ways of Dishonesty; he has either by Fraud or Force made himself a Master of Gold, whereto he had no Right, by that Golden Rule, *Do as thou wouldest be done unto thee.* And what comes of it? The Eggs prove Adde. Or to speak more thoroughly; The Stolen Eggs carry Burning Coals with them, and Consume the Nest with all that belongs unto it. Well said the Psalmist, *A Little that a Righteous man hath, is Better than the Riches of many Wicked.* VVhy, a Righteous man misses many an Advantage, that is taken by them, that *make haste to be Rich.* But then, the Little Money which he gets, has no Rust upon it; it will wear and last like any Steel. Whereas, let a Wicked man, in the ways of Wickedness grow never so Rich, and worth

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worth many Thouslands, 'tis a Thousand to One, but one *Loss* upon the back of another, will at last bring all to be, as the Riches of Pyrates use to be. Father *Latymer* spoke once of a *Cough* that would come upon such as could swallow *Dishonest Gains*. Why, *Losses* do Entue upon such Gains, like so many *Coughs*, and men *Cough* till they Vomit up all they have got. It is a Righteous Thing with God, That One *Loss* after another should snatch away from us, those Riches, whereat we have snatched more *Greedily* than *Honestly*. Any Remarkable Injustice, used either by *Us*, or by our *Fathers* before us, in scraping together much of this *VVoid*, will but make one great *Snow-ball* of it all. One *Loss* will probably haunte it after another, till it be melted all away: at least, *vix gaudet tertius bares*. Yea, There is many a Godly man, who through *Ignorance*, or *Carelessness*, never made a possible *Restitution* of Things unlawfully Obtained, it not by himself, yet by those that Left him what he has; and so a long Series of *Losses* is Entail'd upon him. Thus also, such as have once *Broken*, by their own Extravagancies, rather than by the Unavoidable Frowns of God upon them; and have

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have after all, had more *Fraudulency*, than *Fair-dealing*, in their Compositions with their Creditors, do ordinarily so plunge themselves into further *Losses*, that (as we say) no *Butter will ever stick upon their Bread* afterwards. Yea, If any Thing have been Gotten by any Trade, offensive unto God; such a Trade, suppose, as that wherein by *Strong Drink Sold unto our Indians*, the Salvages have been hastened unto Hell before their Time; 'tis well if it beent *Lost*, all in as little a while as it was *G.t*; and it may be, that some Good men have made the Unwary and Unhappy Trial of it. I would only add thus much, VVhen we see a *Corruption* upon what we have, Let us look whether there be no *Moth Lodged in it*; and remember, that a *Moth* may be (if not in a Garment yet) in an *Estate*, for Twenty, Thirty, Forty Years together.

God forbid, that every one, who meets with *Losses* in his Estate, should be Remarkably Chargeable with all or any of these Iniquities. Nevertheless, *Loosers, Consider your Wayes.*

II. VVhatever may be our *Losses*, Let us

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us not be too much Discouraged by those Losses, nor Loose our Spirits under them. Though your Daily Bread seem to be Failing of you, do not now Eat the Bread of Sorrows, but Sleep as quietly and as pleasantly as ever; for you may be still, *The Beloved of God*. O do not give way to sinking Dejections, or Despondings, and Overwhelming Melancholly; do not say, *I now fear, I shall come to wint before I Die!* Alas, That comes with a Fear. But hear the Voice of the Gracious G d unto you; which is, *Fear not, I am with thee; and I will never Leave thee nor Forsake thee.* 'Tis One Consolation for you, that God is Able to Retrieve all your Losses. When Amaziah once at one Clap, Lost unto the value of Thirty Seven Thousand Five Hundred Pound Sterling, in ready Money, he was very much concern'd about his Loss. But it was then said unto him, in 2 Chron. 25. 9. *The Lord is Able to give thee much more than this.* I pray, who first Gave all that you have now Lost? It was God; that God, whose is the Earth, and the Fullness thereof: And cannot that Omnipotent God, again, Give thee much more than this? Although Job had Lost All; yet after all it came to that, in Job 42.

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so. The Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. It may be Thus with you, though your Losses bring you to be, As poor as Job : I am sure, your Contentation would be a good Bottom for such an Expectation. 'Tis indeed often seen, that no persons are so unable to bear Losses, as those that once had nothing at all to loose. They that start up from nothing to be Rich on the sudden, are usually most affighted, and most repining, when petite Losses create in them a suspicion of losing more. But it would rather become them to argue so, The God that brought me to something out of nothing, may make me of Nothing, to become Something again, if it pleases Him. However, I have one more Consolation for you : 'Tis, That I hope God is not among your Losses. When David had Lost at once, all that he had been getting together for many years, 'tis said in 1 Sam. 30. 6. He Encouraged Himself in the Lord his God. A blessed Cordial, to keep us from Fainting under our Losses ! This is Lost, you say, and That is Lost ; but in Gods Name, Is God Lost ? Have not you a God still to go unto, and live upon ? There are some, who so read that place in Job 22. 25. The Almighty shall be thy God. Christians,

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Christians, You have still Gold enough, so long as you have not lost the Almighty God: Unless you will say, that Gold was your God; and then I did amiss to call you Christians. Indeed, when Micah had Lost something, he cry'd out, *Ye have taken away my Gods, and what have I more?* Yea, but in the midst of all your Losses, dare you utter or mutter such a word as that, *Ye have taken away my Gods?* Then truly might you say, *I have lost all, I have no more.* Whereas, you have a God, an All-sufficient God, an Everlasting God, still to Friend: and so you may sing the Song of the Prophet over all, *Thee the Fields shall yield no meat, and the Flock shall be cut off from the Field, yet I will Rejoice in the Lord, and will joy in the God of my Salvation.* When that Excellent Person, Galeacius Caracciulus, had Lost a brave Living, he said unto some that Visited him, *That mans Money may perish with him, who counts all the Riches in the World, worth one Dayes Communion with God in Christ.* Why, though you have Lost never so much, yet sure, you have not Lost your Communion with God, or at least, your Liberty for that Communion. So, your Losses are, but like the spilling of a Cup of Water, to him that has

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a Living and a Running Fountain at his Door. I say then, Be chearful ; *All may be well yet ; yea, All is well, for all this.*

III. Let our *Losses* help to wean us from such things as those whereof we are Bereaved in our *Losses*; and let us not over prize what we daily LOOSE. What is the Language of all our *Losses*? but that in Pial. 39th 6. *Men are disquieted in vain ; be not ye up Riches, and knowes not who shall gather them.* So then, Let us no more be so vain, as to seek for our Happiness, in such Things as will not stand by us when we have them. The first sin of man, was our Admiring of Creatures as our Chief Good ; and the Committal of that sin, Impregnated our very Natures with a Disposition to make such Addrestes. But our *Losses* do Engrave that Motto upon the Foreheads of all Creatures, *These are Lying Vanities*; and the *Losses* work well, when they take off our Hearts from those *Vanities*. The Apostle writes, in 2 Cor. 4 18. *We look not at the Things, which are seen ; for the Things which are seen, are Temporal.* Our *Losses* do proclaim, that these things are no more than *Temporal*; and so they should not have to

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so much of our *Looks*, nor of our *Lovers*, as heretofore. What are all our *Losses*, but the *Wormwood*, wherewith our God would Embitter those *Breasts* of Creatures, which we too much fancy to hang upon? 'Tis most suitably pressed upon us, in 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30. *The Time is short; It remains that they who purchase, be as though they possessed not.* Even so, Since our *Losses* tell us, that the *Time* of any Creatures Continuance with us, is but very *short*, Let us not be too fond of any Creature whatsoever. Let us not *Lean* upon these things for the supply of our *Necessaries*: inasmuch as our *Losses* have told us, *They are but Broken Reeds.* Do not any more imagine, that these things will be sufficient *Reliefs* against our manifold *Sorrows*; our *Losses* tell us, *They are but Miserable Comforters.* Do not imagine, that these things will be *Remedies* for all the *Maladies* whereto we are Exposed; Our *Losses* tell us, *They are but Physicians of no value.* It is observable, That when Riches do without any Interruption flow in upon us, we grow but the more *Hungry* and *Craving* after them; *Crefest Amor Numm.* 'Tis well therefore that our God, Orders now and then a *Loss* for us: 'tis to make us think, Certainly here is *no*

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my Rest ! Wo to me, if God put me off with a Portion in such wretched Perishables ! Possibly, if we knew when we had *Enough* of these things, our Heavenly Father would not send so many *Losses*, to be as it were the *Voiders* of our Tables. There are some Considerable Dealers in the World, who are such Mortify'd Men, that they *Stint* their Estates, at a Moderate and Competent Elevation; they Resolve, that they will never be *Richer* than just so far; all that they get over and above, they'll generously give away to *Pious Uses*; and as they Resolve, that they will never be *Richer*, so the Smiles of God upon them seem to Resolve, that they shall never be *Poorer* all their Dayes. Excellent is the Rule that I have seen sometimes given, *Be more thoughtful how to use what you have, unto the Glory of God, than how to gain more.* Whereas, if we are like the Herseeks, always *at Give ! Give !* Our God often Orders that we *Loose* accordingly. A Grasp after too much, is the *Loss* of all. What shall I say ? If our *Losses* did speak nothing more Diminutive about the things of this World, than only thus much, *That they are Momentany Things*; yet *What were enough to Disgrace them* for

for ever with us. We Read concerning a Rich Fool, in Luk. 12. 19. VWho said unto himself, *Thou hast Goods Laid up for many years*; but yet that very Night he Lost all. And a Fool indeed he was! Truly, after our Losses, we shall be most Exemplary Fools, if we count any of our Goods, *Laid up for many years.*

IV. Let our Losses provoke us to make sure of those things which are beyond the reach of Losses; and let us get an Interest in such things as never can be Lost. Could we hear the voice of all our Losses, we should find our selves bespoken in such Emphatical Terms as those, in Luk. 10. 41, 42. *Thou art Careful and Troubled about many things, But One Thing is Needful; that Good Part, that shall not be taken away.* Have we Lost Many Things? It is not worth while to be Careful and Troubled, about such Things any Longer. Let us now be more sollicitous than ever, about *The Good Part, which cannot be taken away.* And what is that Good Part? In short, It is a Part in the New Covenant. Let us Look to it, that God be ours; For, *He is from Everlasting to Everlasting.* Let us Look to

26 The true Causē

to it, that Christ be ours: For, *He is Yesterday, to Day, and for ever the same.* Look to it, that we have Grace in our Souls; for we may lay of Divine Grace, as 'tis said of Divine Joy, *Nothing shall be able to take it from you.* Let us make sure, that Heaven be ours. What said the Apostle, in Heb. 10. 34. *Rejoice Joyfully the Spoiling of your Goods, knowing within your selves, that you have in Heaven, a Better and an Enduring Substance.* Thus, we may, *Take Joyfully the Loss of our Goods,* if we are sure of Heaven for our Portion: and if we have true Grace in us, there will be that within our selves, from whence we may *Know that Heaven does belong unto us;* we shall have an Inchoation of Heaven there. A Reverend and Renowned Minister, among the Ancients, having suddenly Lost all that he had in the World, presently Lifted up his Eyes to Heaven, and said, *Lord, Why should I be Concerned about the Loss of Silver and Gold; Thou knowest my All was not here; my All is in Heaven, & blessed be God, I have not Lost Heaven yet!* Bravely Spoken! Let us have our Claim to Heaven sure; and our Title to all the Promises good; Then whatever Loss comes, we may still with Triumphant

of Looing 27

umphane Souls rejoice, *All is yet
safe, as long as my God, my Christ, my
Heaven is yet Left.* It would seem
strange, if I should say, *A man may
grow Rich upon his Losses;* but I do af-
fert it, and I can evince it. A man
that is Owner of infinitely more than
all that this *World* can afford unto
him, is undoubtedly a *Rich* man. But
a man may be so Awakened by his
Losses, that he shall thereby come to be
more Acquainted with *God*, more Con-
formed to *Christ*, more Established in
Grace, more Experienced at his *Chiili-
an Warfare*, and more Prepared for the
Inheritance of the Saints in Light, than
ever he was before. Now, here are
Blessednesses infinitely beyond all that this
World can *Enrich* a man withal. Let
us Lea a more *Godliness*, and more
Contentment, and we are sure of, Great
Gains! *M. Junius Confucius*, quam-
plenus mansuetum, said he of old. It
was the Advice of our Lord, in Matt.
6. 19, 20. *Lay not up for your selves,
Treasures upon Earth, where Misch and
Rust doth Corrupt, and where Thieves
break through and Steal. But Lay up for
your selves Treasures in Heaven.* Let our
Losses by *Misch*, and *Rust*, and *Theft*,
make us more fidelous than ever we
were

28 The true Cause

were, in securing of that *Heavenly Treasure*, which never can be prey'd upon. Since we cannot be *sure* of these things, Let us come to this issue, I'll give all Diligence to make my Calling and Election sure! It will be a sad symptom upon us, if we should Serve our Maker, one jot the less, for any of our Losses: it would help the Devil to a Truth, in that Accusation against us, which he brought with a *Lye* against Job of old; *The man is mercenary in his Obedience*; Do but put forth thine Hand, and Touch all that he has; and he will have soon bare hands serving of thee. No, No; Let us be more prayerful, more watchful, more Abounding in *all* the works of the Lord, because of our Losses; and so we shall be vast Gainers by the Losses. We shall be *Wise Merchants*, if by Loosing of all, we have a faster hold on, *The Pearl of Great Price*. Yea, And who can tell, whether we shall not shelter our selves against all sorts of Losses, by our giving to the Great Things of Eternity, the First and Chief Regards? This I can tell; that the Lord said unto Solomon, in 1 Chron. i. ii. Because thou hast not asked Riches, Wealth, and Honour; but hast asked Wisdom and Knowledge; *Wisdom and Knowledge is granted unto thee,* and

OF LOOSING. 29

and I will give thee Riches, and Wealth,
and Honour too.

V. The very Occasions of our Losses, may administer unto us, those Reflections which may Occasion our Gaining by our Losses. It was a Riddle once propounded, in Judg. 14. 14. One of the Eater came forst Meat. Now that Riddle may be expounded in the Occasions of those Losses, that sometimes do trouble us. Our Losses are monstrous Eaters, they eat away huge morsels of what we have. But we may teeth Meat for our Souls, out of those Eaters, by Devout Reflections thereupon. As now; Have our Losses been by Burnings? Then we may Reflect, Lord, Let not my Soul perish in Everlasting Burnings? Reflect, Lord, Let not thy Anger burn against this poor Seal of mine! Again, Have our Losses been by Shipwrecks? Then we may Reflect, Lord, Let me never make Shipwreck of the Faith, and of a Good Conscience! Reflect, Lord, keep my SOUL from the Lusts which may drown it in Perdition! Once more, Have our Losses been by Robbers? Then Reflect, Lord, who gave my Substance to the Spoiler, & the Robber, but thou, the Lord, against whom I have sinned? O let me make my Peace

30 The true Cause

Peace with my Offended God! Or, Have we been Cheated? Reflect then, Lord, Let me not be one that shall deceive my own SOUL; neither let the Tempter deceive me! Moreover, Have our Losses been by Carelessness, or Imprudence? Then Reflect, Lord, Let me use more Earnest Heed, in the Things of my Everlasting Peace! Finally, Have our Losses been, by Droughts, by Rains, by Unfruitful Seasons? Reflect upon it, Lord, Let me bring forth Fruits meet for thee, by whons I am dressed; and let me glorie thee, by bringing forth of much Fruit! Any one such Reflection having its due Impression upon our mind, would largely make amends for any of the Losses that might occasion it.

VI. Let every Loss quicken our zealous and fervent cares to avoid the worst Loss, that can befall us; and that is, The Loss of our own SOULS. The Dutch have a saying well worthy of a Remembrance with us all; *He that hath Lost his Money, hath Lost nothing; He that hath Lost his Credit, hath Lost half; but he that hath Lost his SOUL, There's a man that hath Lost all.* We all of us naturally have a Lost SOUL, within us; a SOUL fallen into the

Islands

Hands of Internal Enemies, and Eternal Miseries. Unless this Undone Soul be recovered out of those Hands, by the Saving Influences of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is *Lost* for ever, without any *Remedy*, or *Escaping*. A Dead Soul, That's a *Dead Loss* indeed! And oh that the awful words of the Son of God, were continually sounding in our Ears, from Mat. 16. 26. *What is a man profited, if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul?* There is many an Ungodly Man, that meets with few or no Losses for many a year together; this is that, *Prosperity of the Wicked*, whereat the Saints have sometimes been so *Foolish* as to be *Envious*. But in the mean time, what becomes of the Precious and Immortal Souls, which they carry about them? Alas! There is, *A Leanness sent into their Souls*; and their Souls are so Estranged from God, so Enslaved unto the Devil, and so Entangled in the Snares of Hell, that I do most Heartily Pray, *Lord, Let me rather Loose till I beg my Bread, than gain the whole world, with a Soul in such doleful Circumstances.* It may be that some of these may be so absurd, as to expect the Salvation of their Souls for ever, because God makes them to meet with no more

32 The true Cause

more *Losses* here; A silly Story! Thus the Heathen Historians write of one *Polyvates*, who strangely succeeded in all his Affairs; in so much that once when he threw a costly Ring into the Sea, that very Ring was brought him again, in the Belly of a Fish: but yet, that man came to a most miserable End at the last. O be warned of it; Though a man should never meet with any other *Loss*, yet if he do not make sure of a *Saved Soul*, he will be a very dreadful sort of a *Looser* after all. That *Lost Soul* will go down into the Pit, and then you have *Lost* all; God, and Hope, and Life, and Happiness is *Lost* for evermore. But how much more ought they that instead of *Gaining* the whole World, are *Loosing* of it every day, to be solicitous, that they don't *Loose* *WORLD* and *SOUL* and *ALL* together! Be assured, if thy *Soul* should be *Lost* at last, all thy Grievs for what thou hast *Lost* in this *World*, are but, *The beginnings of Sorrows*. 'Tis a *Pain of Loss*, that is the Hell of Hell it self, & the Intollerable, and the Interminable Anguish of the Damned. When the Terrible God is now stripping thee of thy *Pleasant Things*, 'tis but a Terrible Emblem and Earnest of the black Night, wherein

of Loosing 33

wherein thou shalt suffer the Loss of all that is Desirable, and be left, Wretched and Miserable and Poor and Blind and Naked, and not have so much as a Drop of Water to Cool thy Tongue; but I, Hardly beslead, and Hungry, and Fretting, and Cursing of God, and Looking upward. O think of these things; and see to it, that, A Lost Soul, be not one Article in the Bill of thy Losses; but let thy Losses Excuse thee to be found among them, who Believe unto the Saving of the Soul.

*Possidet ille nibil, Cor tuum qui perdidit unum.
Perdidit ille nibil, Cor tuum qui possidet unum.*

*Quidam id est, quo si careas, dores; si
habeas, angeris; si amissas, Crucias;
Aurum et Argentum est.*

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THE
True Way of
Thriving.

Ecclesiastes XI. 1, 2.

*'Cast thy Bread upon the Waters; for thou
shalt find it after many Dayes
Give a Portion to Seven, and also to Eight;
for thou knowest not, what Evil shall be up-
on the Earth.'*

Behold, a Duty of our Christian Conversation, which according to the Divine Heraldry of the Scripture, has a very High Place in Christianity belonging to it; a Duty than which there are not many, more acceptable to God, more Profitable to Us, more Honourable to our Profession, or more Neglected and Omitted by multitudes, that will yet wear the Name which was begun

D at

2 The true Way

at Antioch. And it is Remarkable to see, what a broad Contradiction is herein given to the Dictates of that Common and Carnal Reason, which mankind is generally mis-guided by. The Ordinary Notion of the World is, If I have Bread, my own Cupboard is the fittest place to keep it in. But the Holy Spirit of God will teach us otherwise, Cast thy Bread upon the Waters. The Customary Dialect of the World is, He keep what I have, because I know not what Evil I may Live to see, I may Live to want it all. But we are otherwise Advis'd by the Holy Spirit of God; Give a Portion, because thou knowest not what Evil may be upon the Earth. 'Tis the God of Heaven, to whom we are beholden, for our Estates; our Possessions and Enjoyments, by which we are furnished against the Natural Inconveniences of Humane Life, are all bestowed upon us, by that God, whose Providence disposeth of all our Affairs; and as we have it, in Deut. 8 17, 18. Thou shalt not say in thine Heart, my power has gotten me this Wealth; but thou shalt Remember, the Lord thy God; for it is He that gives thee power to get Wealth. It is neither Skill nor Chance, that brings our Estates into our Hands; but it is God, of whom we are told, That He is the Maker both of the Rich and of the Poor. Nothing in the World can then be more Agreeable, than for us to Remember this God, in all our Wealth; and to Remember Him with it, is the best Remembrance of Him in it. The one Course in which we are to make a Surrender

of Thriving 3

Surrender of our Spirits and our Bodies unto God, must by a parity of Reason also Devote our Estates unto Him; and All that we Have, as well as All that we Are, must come under a Dedication to the Lord. Most absurd was the Language of Nisi the Chur's
Shall I take my Bread, and my Water, and my F'ch, and give it? Think, O Senseless Man, How canst Thou by it? It is God that gives us all that we have; and by giving it unto us, He has not parted with His own Right in it all. No, He still is the Lord Proprietor of all; and we own it in that Covenant wherein we Choose Him for our Lord. It is therefore most highly Reasonable, That we should be at the Direction of the Eternal God, as to what we do with our Estates; esteeming our selves but Stewards of those Things, whereof our Neighbours call us the Owners, and preparing our selves for the Account which we must give of our Stewardship unto Him that is, The Lord of All. Now the Orders which our Lord has given us, about our Estates, are principally Two. The First, is in 1 Tim. 5.
8 *If any provide not for his own, especially those of his own House, he bath Denied the Faith.* Our Estates are in the first place, to Feed and Cloath and Cherish our own Families; and we may even Lay up for our Children a part thereof, if that may be done without the Defrauding of such other Objects as God has required us, as long as we Live, to be helpful unto. But then there is Another part of our Estates, that must ne-

4 The true Way

Consecrated unto more Pious Uses ; and about that we have the Command in the Text now before us.

In the Context, you may read a Wise Monarch Reflecting upon the *Vanities* and *Miseries* which the *Dead Flies*, (and perhaps the *Maggots*) of Great Men, do oftentimes Plunge a Poor People into. 'Tis often seen, that a Poor People, by the Influence of Unhappy States-men, are brought into inexorable Troubles and Ruines ; and our Text, is a Council given to such a People. The Council is, That Men should be Liberal of their Estates, to *Pious Uses*; especially at such a Time, as there is like to be, *Evil on the Earth*, or, when much Confusion is like to happen in the Land. The Doctrine to which I Demand your Attention, is only This,

DOCTRINE,

That men ought with a Gracious Liberality to Devote a good Proportion of their Estates to *Pious Uses*.

My Text Contains almost all, That need be said for the Explication and the Confirmation of this Charitable Truth, and I have Three Questions before me, to Discourse upon : **WHAT ?** and, **HOW ?** and **WHY ?**

The

of Thriving

The first Question before us, is,

What are those Pious Uses, that a Proportion of our Estates must be Devoted unto? And under these Four Heads may they be Enumerated, Paying, Leading, Giving, and Forgiving.

First, then, The Paying of our Duties, to the Publick Charges of the Place in which we Live, is one of those Pious Uses, which our Estates are to be put unto. Something must be paid by us, for the Support of the Government, and of the Ministry, which God has blessed us withal; the Publick Servants of the Place, must by our Estates be made Capable to Discharge what Obligations we have Laid upon them; and tho' these be Pious Uses, yet we may not place them under the Head of *Alms Deeds*; they are *Debts* which Honesty ratifies than Charity binds us to the Payment of.

There are Civil Payments, which may be Enumerated under the Pious Uses of our Estates. Thus 'tis said in Rom. 13.
6. Right Magistrates are the Ministers of God; Render therefore to all their Due, Tribute unto whom Tribute is Due. The
D 3 Rulers.

6 The true Way

Rulers of a Country, must keep up the Administration of Justice, and they ought also to see that *Schoole-masters* and *Souldiers*, & other such Officers, do not want their Salaries. The *Chearful Payments* of the *Taxes* needful in order hereunto, are some of the *Pious Uses*, in which our Estates must be Employ'd. There are also *Sacred Payments* which may be Annumerated unto the *Pious Uses* of our Estates. Thus 'tis said in Gal. 5. 6, 7. *Let him that is taught in the Word, Communicate unto him that teacheth, in all Good Things;* Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Laborious and Religious Ministers, that spend their Time in Cares for the Souls of those whom God has made them Overseers unto, must be so handomely provided for, that they may become neither Discouraged nor Contemptible in their Work; to pretend that we Love them and Prize them, and Get Good by them; and yet think much of their Having *All the Good Things* that we can help them to; the Apostle intimates, That this is a *Stocking* of the Almighty God Himself; and they that Reproach them as *Haulings* for Expecting of it, are persons that have no more value for the *Bible*, than for the *Almanack*; and seem to have Read both alike.

of Thriving. 7

alike. It was observable, That when God stated the *Stipend* of His Ministers, it was at such a rate as this: The *Levites* were not a *tenth* part of the People, yet had they about three Times the Revenue of any one among the *Twelve Tribes of Israel*. But, it seems, to many, that in the *New Testament* God has Left His Ministers wholly unprovided for! However we are as Loth to speak as any body else can be to bear of such things. Only it now Lies in my way to say, The Maintaining of Worthy Preachers, is another of the *Pious Uses* appointed for our Estates.

But, Secondly, The Ready *Lending* of what may Assist those that want *Means* and *Helps* for their *Trades*, is likewise one of the *Pious Uses* which our Estates are to be placed in. It is mentioned as the Property of a *Good* Man, in Pial. 37. 26. *He is ever merciful & Lendeth*; and in Pial. 112. 5. *He sheweth Favour and Lendeth*. Indeed, A *Lending* to Idle Vagabonds and Vails, or those whom we may suppose to borrow with the mind of the wicked man, which the Scripture tells us, is, *Never to Pay again*; this is not among the *Pious Uses*, but the *injurious uses* of our Estates; our *Lending*

8 The true Way

Lending should be to such, as are likely thereby to come into a way of what they may call their own; and in that case we have that Precept, in Deut 15. 7, 8. *Thou shalt open thy Hand wide unto thy poor Brother; and shalt surely Lend him sufficient for his Need.*

And Thirdly, The Giving of what may supply the Necessities, and Relieve the Calamities of the Indigent, is among the Pious Uses of our Estates. It was the Speech of the Apostle, in 1 John 3. 17. *Whoso has this World's Goods, and see his Brother has Need, and shutteith up his Bowels of Compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him? We must Give of our Goods to our Brethren, when they have a manifest Need thereof.*

There is a more Spiritual Beneficence, which our ~~Gift~~ is to be sometimes unto. Contributions for the Propagation of the Gospel, are most Pious Uses; and such are Subscriptions towards the Education of Poor, but Good Scholars in the University, or elsewhere; and the same is to be laid concerning the Distribution of Bibles, and Catechisms, and other Devout and Useful Books to such as will else be without them. Who knows, but

of Thrifing 9

but with a Shilling a man may so Save a Soul for ever? There is also a more *Temporal Beneficence*, which our Giving may sometimes be Exercised in. 'Tis among *Pious Uses*, for us to bestow upon the Distressed, That we may make their Circumstances more easy to them; To Comfort the Sick, to Nourish Widows and Orphans, to Redeem Captives, and Prisoners, and make mourning Hearts to Sing.

And unto this File belongs that ~~Mis~~ Hospitality, in which Christians must be Exemplary. 'Tis the Apostolical Injunction in Rom. 12. 13. *Be given to Hospitality*; and in Heb. 13. 2. *Be not Forgetful to Entertain Strangers*. We should be as Ready to Treat a Traveller with what Conveniences we can afford him, as if, Like *Abraham* and *Lot*, we should have unknown Angels to drop into our Hovels.

But, Fourthly, 'Tis among the *Pious Uses* of our Estates for us, to Forgive a Debt, when the Hand of God has made the Power unable to Discharge it. This is that which the Word of God recommends unto us, in Ezek. 18. 7. and elsewhere, under that Expression of *Repaying the Pledge*. *To Restore the Pledge*,

10 The true Way

is, so *Remit the Debt*. I confess, 'tis a just Thing, that they who by Bad Courses, render themselves *Inclivous*, should undergo whatever Lash the Law will help their Creditors to inflict upon them; for they are a sort of *Cheats* and *Thieves*, the punishment of whom is a thing very Sovereign and Wholesome for the whole Body Politick which they belong'd unto. But when the pure Frowns of God, have brought a ~~Debt~~ Debtor Law, it is a commendable thing to say like those Creditors, in Neh. 5. 12. *We will Require Nothing of them*. And you know where to find a Terrible Parable delivered by our Lord Jesus, for the preaching of it. Hence 'tis the Charge of our Lord, in Luk. 6. 35. *Lend, Hoping for Nothing again*. To take that Simply, were to be Simple indeed; it would be to alter the very Nature of *Lending*. But the meaning is, *Lend*, with a Disposition to call for *Nothing again*, in case the Hand of God should impoverish the Borrower. The Greek word here signifies, *to Despair*; when we *Lend*, we should suppose that the *Debt* may become *Desperate*; and be ready to Release *Principal* as well as *Interest*, if Divine Providence make it so.

Here

of Thriving 11

Here are Pious Uses for our Estates. Perhaps you may think I have pro-pounded *None* of them; Wherefore I halten to the Second Question. Which is,

How are we we to Devote a Proportion of our Estates to such PIOUS USES.

My Text, shall give the whole Answer to this Enquiry.

First, We are to do it Readily. That is implied in the word, *Cast*. When any Pious Uses call for our Estates, we must not have them, as though they stuck in our Fingers; No, we are to Cast them out of our Hands, as freely as we do that which we Throw away.

*Dat bene, dat multum, qui dat cum non
vultum.*

This is the Thing Enjoyned in 2 Cor. 9. 7. Let a man Give, not Grudgingly, or of Necessity, for God Loves a cheerful Giver. We must Resign our Estates, with a most Hearty and lively Cast, when we are called therunto; the Pious Uses must not wrest & wring them,

12 The true Way

them, no, but we our selves must *Cast* them out of our Hands. This is implied in Deut. 15. 10, 11. *Then shalt freely give; thy Heart shall not be grieved, when thou givest; thou shalt open thy Hand wide.* We are thus to imitate the Bounty of our *Heavenly Father*; &c it avails not, as the Apostle says, *To bestow all our Goods to Feed the Poor*, if we have not this *Charity* in our doing of it.

Secondly, VVe are to do it *Helpfully*. That which we are to *Cast*, is, *Pread*: it must not be a *Scrap*, much less must it be a *Stone*. It is argued, in Mat. 7. 9. *What man, if his Son ask Bread, will he give him a Stone?* Even so, VVe must afford nothing less than *Bread*, unto thole whom we are to do *Good* unto. Indeed, *Giant's Hair* and *Fair Srons*, and *Looking-Glasses* may go to *Pious Eyes*; but it is only when there are *Uses* for them. VVhen 'tis said, in Mat. 6. 11. *Give us this Day our Daily Bread*; it is but a Translation of Prov. 30. 8. *Feed me with Food convenient for me.* Thus, we are to afford our *Bread*; that is, to afford what may be *Conveniens* for the *Designs* which our *Estate*s are to be *Subservient* unto.

Thirdly

of Thesbing 13

Thirdly, VVe are to do in *Righteousness*. VVhat is to be *Cast*, must be **THY bread**: it must be *Tby own*, and not Another mans. For the Almighty says, in Isa. 61. 8. *I hate Robbery for Burnt Offering*; nor will He allow of it, in any other *Offering*. And hence is that word of our Saviour, in Luk. 11. 42. *Give Alms of such Things as ye Have*. Otherwise indeed all our Expences this way, must have an *Ichabod*. VWritten on them; *Where is their Glory?* VVe must be Lawful Proprietors of those things which we go to Serve Pi^rous Uses with. And hence the Jews call their *Alms box*, A *Chest of Justice*. VVe may not *Filch* and *Steal* for this End; I have Read of *Pious Frauds* indeed, but no where, of *Pious Robberies*. Hence also, They that are under Authority, as Children and servants, may not give away what belongs to their Parents and Masters, without their App^{ro}bation; and whatever the *Wife* may do this way *Without* the Consent of her Husband, she should beware of going directly *Against* it, in such things as these. Hence likewise, They that are joyned in Partnership may not this Way diminish a Common Stock, without the Concurrence of their Partners; and they that alrea-

14 *The true Way*

dy Owe more than they are Worth,
have not so much to do this way as
others have. And Lastly, 'tis not for
men to Raise an Estate by *Unjust*
Means, and think to make up *All* by
giving *Part* unto the Poor; for 'tis a
certain Rule, *Bonus usus non Justificat*
Injusta Quasita.

Fourthly, VVe are to do it Sincerely.
Our Bread is to be Cast upon the
WATERS; and there are two Notes
of Silence couched in that Clause.
Our Estates must be Cast upon the
Waters; that is, without Hope of Re-
turn. By Watery places here, some un-
derstand Watery Faces; that is, thole
whose Cheeks are by Affliction filled
with Tears; and indeed a special Re-
gard is to be had unto such in the
Previous Uses of our Estates. But the mea-
ning rather is this; What is cast upon
the Waters, will either Sink away, or
Swim away; 'tis a Proverb for a thing
that we never Look to see again. It is
Projectam in Mare. Thus, when we are
bountiful with our Estates, it should be
without any proposal of Recipital, from
those whom we do Good unto; they
should not be Cast upon Tidying Waters,
but upon Current Waters; and we must
not

of Thriving 15

not Imagine with our selves, I shall shortly have as Good a Turn done to me, by the man, whom I am now kind unto. We are to single out such Objects therefore, as our Lord pointeth at, in Luk. 14. 14. *Thou shalt be Blessed, for they cannot Reparce thee.* Again, Our Estates must be Cast upon the *Waters*; that is, without Aim at Honour. That which is Cast upon the *Waters*, does not stay to be seen of men. It we Do what good we do, to be *Seen of men*, as the Phariſees did of old, we Cast it not upon the *Waters*, but we Nail it, or Paste it, upon Pillars. We must put into *Waters*, not into Trumpets, the *Pious Uses* of our Estates. Indeed, our being *Seen of men* therein, should not always hinder us from doing what is to be Done. The Bounty whch our God will not accept, is not that, *Quae sit et videatur*, but that, *Quae sit ut videatur*. And it is a Caution, in Mat. 6. 3. *Let not thy Right Hand know, what thy Left Hand does;* that is, as much as may be, Conceal thy *Alms*, not only from them that are molt Related to thee at all; but even from those that are molt *Opposites* to thee in the Scattering of them.

Fifthly, We are to do it *Frequently*. *We*

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must give to Seven and also to Eight ; that is, to as many as we can ; we may not Look upon Two or Three as Enoy to Receive what we have to Give. Hence 'tis assigned as one Quality of a Vertuous man, in Psal. 112. 9. *He bath Dispersed, he bath Given to the Poor.* We should therefore slip no Season, of doing what is to be done for Pious Uses. 'Tis the Speech of the Apostle, in Gal. 6. 10. *As we have Opportunity, Let us Do Good ; but when have we an Opportunity ?*

Truly, We have an Opportunity, whenever we see an Indigency, that we are in a Capacity to do something for. Whom soever we see Lying under any Wounds, we must like the Compassionate Samaritan, Dispense our Oyl and our Wine unto. Say not, I have done Good unto Seven Miserable People already ; No, think not that Number perfect, but let there be Eight Latitudes of your Bounty, if you can make so many. But there are some Seeings on this which have a more certain Relation with us ; and tho' there should be Seven or Eight, yet we should never count that we see too many, of them. As now, Does God make any Addition to our Estates at any

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any Time? Hath any *Adventure*, or any *Husbandry* of ours been smill'd upon? or has any *Legacy* been bequeath'd unto us? Now is a Season for us to Let Pious *Uses* have something of our Increase. Have we Got *Weaub*? Says Moses now in Deut. 8. 18. Now Re-member the Lord thy God. Have we Gained a *Seventh*, or an *Eighth* more than we had? Let *Seven* then, yes, let *Eight* be the better for it. Again, Every *Lords Day* is a Season for this Punity of ours. Thus we find the Apollie saying, in 1. Cor. 16. 1, 2. Con-cerning the *Contribution*. Upon the First Day of the Week, Let EVERY ONE OF YOU LAY by him in store, as God his prepared him. But then, I know a Place in the World, where many Hundreds do very little consider their own *Propriety*! Moreover, A Day of *Hami-tation* is another fit Season for it. Hence is that of the Prophet, in Isa. 58. 6, 7. Is not this the Fast that I have Chosen? To Break thy Bread unto the Hungry? Their Feeding upon our Kindness, is one of the best Articles in our Fasting before the Lord. When we Fast out of Piety, we must see that others do not Fast out of Poverty. Once more, A Day of *Thanksgiving* is an-

18 The true Way

ther fit Sealon for it. On such a Day, it was Commanded, in Neh. 6. 10. Go your way, Eat the Fat, and Drink the Sweet, and Send Portions unto them, for whom Nothing is prepared. When we are Praising of our God, we should then be blessing of our Neighbours; & we should Engage them to Rejoyce with us in the Goodness of the Lord; it is, A Day of Sending Portions one to another, and Gifts to the Poor. Though these Occasions come oftner than Seven or Eight times in a year, yet let our Portions be given on them all.

Sixtly, We are to do it Prudently. You may place a large Remark upon the divers Clauses here. First, We must not Give all away. 'Tis a Part that we are to part withal. Something must be kept for our selves; and as we say, *Charity must begin at Home.* Again, We must not Give All to Some, and none to Others. When we have been helpful to *seven*, we must also see to it, that *Eight*, may have a Room in our Helpfulness unto them. Furthermore; 'Tis not a *Pittance*, but a *Portions* that we are to Give. It must be something that may be a *Tortise*, or a *Benefit* unto him, whom it is Confer'd upon. This

This is that which the Psalmist would have to be minded, in Psal. 112. 5. *A Good man shew's Favour, and Lends; he will Guide his Affayrs with Discretion.* And there is especially a double *Discretion* with which the *Pious Uses* of our Estates are to be adjusted.

First, We are to Give *Speedily*; and avoid all Needless Delays in the Doing of it. Says the Wise man, in Prov. 3. 27. *Say not unto thy Neighbour, Go, and Come Again, and To morrow I will give thee, When thou hast it by thee.* We know, *Bis dat qui cito dat*; but our *Deferring* Looks too like a *Denying* of our Bounty. It is particularly, an Unwise Thing, for a man to put off what Good he may Do, till he shall himself be *Dead* and *gone*. One says well, That oftentimes they that *By their Last Will Bequeath* something to the Poor, do it *Against their Will*; they that in their *Lives* did no Good, may *then* do it, because they can't any longer *Keep* what they *Had*. Whereas, It would be a noble Discretion in us, for us to be our own *Administrators*; making our own *Hands*, our *Executors*, and our own *Eyes*, our *Overseers*. 'Tis done *To the Life*, when 'tis done *In our Lite*.

And

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And then, Secondly, We are to Give Suitably. And this not only for the Measure in which, but also for the Subject to which, we Give. One says very truly, *Turpissimum Genus perdendi est Inconsulta Donatio.* And our Saviour informs us, about our Giving, in Luke 18. 32. It must be, with a Distribution. We must give in the first place to our *Needy Kindred*: and as for others, we must have Respect first unto the *Habitu of Faith*, though we must also *Do good unto all*. As for your *Courious Beggars*, 'tis usually an Injury and a Dishonour unto the Country, for them to be maintained; as for those that Indulge themselves in *Drunkenness*, the Express Command of God unto us, is, *That we should let them Starve*; and as for those that when they Get, will melt and waste our Money in *Drunkenness*, 'tis a sin to supply thole Monsters with what may be used for such a Peccable Vice. Let never any thing but a *Norught*, stand for them, in the Books of accounts.

*Tis after this manner that we are to Do God with our *Charity*. For this belongs us to the Third *Commandment*, & which is,

Why are we thus to Devote a Proportion of our Estates to PIOUS USES.

My Text will give you a double Reason for it.

The First Reason is, *Thou shalt find it after many days.* There will a Glorious, yea, an Eternal Recompence be made unto us, for all our Liberality. Some think, that here is an Allusion to Ventures at Sea; Our Liberality sends Ventures forth, upon the Waters; and there are very Great and Rich Returns made thereof. But Let us a Lill: de-scent upon this Recompence.

The words may be Rendred, *Thou shall find it in Multitude of Dayes.* This is indeed one Recompence of Liberality; there is a Multitude of Dayes, or a Long Life, which the God of Heaven often favours a Liberal man withal. It was a Speech once used unto a cruel Charl, in Dan. 4. 27. *Show mercy to the Poor,* and it may be a Lengthening out of thy Tranquillity. Behold, a Receipt, pro prolonganda vita; Let us be Liberal, as our Father Abraham was; and that's the way for us, Like Abraham to Live.

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till a Good Oll Age, till we are Old men, and full of years. It has been often observed, that very *Liberall* men, use to be *Long lived* men. 'Tis the full and firm word of our God, in Psal. 41. 1, 2. *Blessed is he that Considereth the Poor; the Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive.* Thus we shall find our *Bread after many Dayes*; we shall have *many Dayes*; this *Bread* will keep us *Alive*, till *many Dayes* have passed over us. But I dismiss that Sentence of the words; and only Lay down this Conclusion.

That *Liberality* is wonderfully Advantageous to them that use it, and this, for a *Long while* afterwards.

Our Lord assures us, in Mat. 10. 42. *Whosoever gives but a Cup of Water, shall in no wise loose his Reward;* and yet that is the least piece of *Liberality*, that can be thought of. We have the word of *Him that cannot Lie*, to assure us, that we shall not be *Lost* by our *Liberality*; that our Estates thus Laid out, *Non perirent vel perturbarunt*; that *one* of our *Bread* be *Cast* on, yet if it do not be *Lost* in, the *VVaters*. I will not here dispute about the *Lawfulness* of *Usury*; but I will tell you of an *Usury* that

of Thriving 23

that I am sure is Lawfull; and yet it is an *Usury* so far exceeding that of Six in the Hundred, as that it is an Hundred for Six, yea, 'tis far more than an *Hundred for One*. Let a man be Liberal upon *Pious Uses*, and upon the word of a God, Let him know, that as in Mark 10. 30. *He shall Receive an Hundred fold now in this Time; and in the World to come, Eternal Life.* Hence, there are two Metaphors, with which our Good God Condescends to give us this Assurance. One Metaphor is that of Sowing. Thus 'tis said, in 2 Cor. 9. 6. *He that Soweth bountifully shall Reap bountifully.* Let a man be *liberal* with what he has, and he shall be sure of a Good Crop; the *Bread Cast on the Waters*, will prove but a Seed cast into an *Earth* more fertile than that of which we read that *Isaac*, did *Receive an hundred fold*. Another Metaphor is that of Lending. Thus 'tis said, in Prov. 19. 17. *He that bath pity on the Poor, Lendeth to the Lord;* and then we may take for granted what follows, *That which he bath given, will He pay him again.* Let a man be *Liberal*; and he shall have the Counterbond of the most High to save him harmless. As for the *Bread Cast into the Waters*, our God under-

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His own Hand acknowledges the Receipt
of it, and stoops to Charge himself a
Debtor on the Score.

First then, There is a Recompence in
This Life, which the Liberal man, is
made partaker of. And this every
way; for, to be particular; Even his
Inward man, shall have the Comfort of
his Liberality. Thus 'tis laid in Prov.
11. 25. *The liberal Soul shall be made*
Fat God will give a Thiving, Flou-
rishing, Comfortable Soul unto him;
and fill him with the Peace, which *pas-*
seth Understanding. His Liberality shall
also procure good Circumstances to his
Outward man. Not only will that word
be fulfill'd unto him, *He that giveth to*
the Poor shall not Lack; but also, God
will bleſs him with an *Increase* of his
Enjoyments. Thus 'tis laid in Prov. 3.
9, 10. *Honour the Lord with thy Sub-*
stance; and so *shalt thy Lards be filled*
with plenty. I could mind you of poor
little Trades-men that have come to
Live upon their Rents, by the secret
Blessing of God upon their Callings, when
they have Conscientiously laid aside a
certain part of their Income, for the
Lord. And God will bleſs him with
a Success of his Businesses. Thus 'tis said

in

of Thriving 25

in Deut. 15. 10 *Ibou shalt surely give to the Poor, because that for this thing, the Lord thy God will bless thee in all thy Works.* I have known a Ship-mast'r, who upon going to Sea, would still carry a considerable Purse of Money unto a Faithful Minister, to be by him Laid out for God; and a strange Blessing did Accompany him! Yea, The Children of such a man, do rejoice in the Fruits of his Liberality. Many Grapple Hold-fasts in the World, object against Liberality, That they must Lay up for their Children. But say I, Lay out, and that's the way to Lay up. Let your Bread be Cast on the Waters, and it will be safely Reposed in Gods bags for your Children after you: Do you give a Portion to Seven, and also to Eight, and then though you have Seven or Eight Children, you have made sure of a Portion for every one of them. Your Widows, will have Meat and Oyl very like to hers of old. Be like *Sorabas*, and your poor Neighbours will have the Harvest of it. You shall say, I speak nothing with my Back, and therefore you shall have a Answer for this too, 'tis that in Psal 37. 26. *The man that is ever merciful, and lends, his Soul is blessed* over us. But

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Secondly, There is also a Recompence in the *Life to Come*, which the Liberal man is made partaker of. 'Tis testified unto us, in 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. That they who be *Ready to Distribute, Willing to Communicate*, therein, Lay up in store for themselves a Good Foundation against the *Time to Come*, and Lay *bld* on *Eternal Life*. As for all the Riches that we keep with our selves, they have no Foundation for them; any Little storm will carry them away. But the *Treasures* whi h a true Liberality shall put out of our Hands, have such a Foundation, that we may thereupon build our Hopes of *Life Eternal*; Not that any *Good Works* of ours do Merit *Life Eternal*, but they are a Blasted Evidence and Argument of our Claim unto it; so that a Liberal Man, when he comes to Dy, may say, *Lord, Thou knowest that my Heart was never Set upon this World; and I take that for a sign, that thou hast another and a better World for me to be happy in for ever.* Our Lord says about the Liberal man, in Luke 16. 9. When he falleth, they will receive him into Everlasting Habitations. All the Riches in the World won't keep us from Falling and Breaking at the

the last. But then, the *Saints* whom we have Succoured, and the *Angels* whom we have Imitated here, will bid us Welcome to an *House Eternal in the Heavens*. Our Lord also says unto the Liberal man, in Luke 14. 14. *Thou shalt be Recompenced at the Resurrection of the Just.* It is impossible to tell, what Satisfaction, the *New Jerusalem* will bring to such a man, at the *Resurrection of the Just.* But indeed, after the Stupendous Transactions of the **GREAT DAY**, throughout the Days of Eternity still all our present Acts of Liberality, will be Lying by us, like so many *Good Bills of Exchange*, which our merciful God, for the sake of Christ Jesus, will be for ever Owning and Paying off. Then shall a Liberal *Onesiphorus* be sufficiently Realiſed by the Lord. This, This will be *after many Days* indeed! yea, after more than many millions of Ages, we shall make a greater Gain of the Poor, than *Joseph* did of a *Famine* in the Days of old. How runs the Final Sentence of the *Righteous*, bat so? *Come, ye Bleſſed, Inherit the Kingdom;* inasmuch as you were Liberal to my Afflicted Members in the former World. (Mark) He says not, *For you have been Orthodox in your Opinions,* or, *You have*

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been *Entertained* in your *Protections*, or, You have been *Abundant* in your *Deviotions*; No, But you have been *Liberal* to the *Miserable*. But then,

The Second Reason is, Thou knowest not what Evil shall be upon the Earth. This is a *Troublesome World*, and that should periwade us to a *Loyal Heart*. We may be called to Wade through a *Sea* of Troubles, but if our *Bread* be Cast into the *Waters*, that will make them *Fasty* to us. Would we be *Delivered* in *Six Troubles*, as *Eliphasz* Expresses it, and in *Seven* would we have no *Evil* *Touch* us? Then Let us give a *Portion* to *Seven*, and also to *Eight*.

But Let us a little penetrate into the Force of this periwative.

First then, Since, Thou knowest not what Evil shall be upon the Earth, hence thou knowest not how long thou shalt Enjoy thine *Estate*, and it is Witsome to Husband it well, before it be Too Late. There may quickly come such Evil upon us, that either our *Estates* may be taken from us, or we from our *Estates*. Let us therefore be Liberal, in doing what Good we can, whilst

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as it is said in Prov. 3. 27. *Thou bath it by thee.* Since the Times are like to be Dangerous, 'tis best for us to put as much of our Estates into thole Hands, where no Violence can spoil us of them; now such are the Hands of God, and of His People; *Manus pacificum est Christi Gazeophyllicum.*

Secondly, Since, *Thou knowest not what Evil shall be upon the Earth,* it were well for thee to do what may Compose & Settle thy Heart in the anxious prospect of all that Evil. Now this will be done by being truly Liberal of those Estates, which are the things that so much make us afraid of Evil Times. Look into Phil. iii. 7, 9. where 'tis said, *He shall not be Afraid of Evil Tidings;* Why not? It is added, *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the Poor.* You see the *Liberal* man, has a Cordial against the Fears of *Evil Dayes.* For, The Great God has promised, either to *Preserve him from that Evil that shall be upon the Earth;* as in Plat. 41. 1. *Blessed is he that Considereth the Four, the Lord will deliver him in Time of Trouble:* Or else, to *Supply him in that Evil;* as in Isa. 58. 10. *Draw out thy Soul to the Hungry, then shall thy Light Rise in Obscur-*

30 The true Way

Obcurity. In short, since thou knowest not what Evil shall be upon the Earth, hence thou knowest not but thou thy self must come into such a Condition as may want the Liberality of other men; What is Their Case to day, may be Thine to morrow. If thou wouldest then fall among *Liberal* Persons, be now such an one thy self. 'Tis the promise, in Mat. 5. 7. *The Merciful shall obtain Mercy.*

All this Practical Discourse has been *Milke'd*, and not *Squeezt* out of the Text before us. Little can remain to be said in the

APPLICATION.

They that Fear God will find themselves mov'd by these things, to a most Exemplary Liberality, in Devoting a due proportion of their Estates to *Evangelical Uses*. I do not now take upon me, to determine the *Quota pers.* or what Proportion of our Estates ought always to be improved. Only, I will tell you, what our Father *Jacob* owned a due Proportion; we read in Gen. 28. 20. *He vowed a Vow unto God, saying if all*

of Thribing 31

that thou shant give me, I will surely give the Tenth unto thee. And if Abraham judged a Tenth due unto Melchisedeck, why should we judge any less to be the Dues of his Antitype, our Blessed Saviour? I think a Tenth too Little for some men, at some times; however, if they that are never so Poor, would make a Trial for so much, I am confident, they would never have any Temptation to Leave it off. Shall I tell you? I have known those, who in their Childhood, while they were not yet Owners of near Ten Shillings, have begun the Trial of it, and God hath so smiled upon them ever since, that they never had any Temptation or Occasion to do otherwise. but that which is rather to be blessed is, That we mind the Call and Voice of Providence in this matter; and then let a Self-denying, and a Well-mortified Heart be our Director in it. Let us not be unmindful, That the Honour of our Profession much depends upon our Integrity for *These Us*. It may shame us to see, that those who are under the Influence of none but a False Religion, can have it said of them, in Isa. 46. 6. *They have cast God out of the Bag.* And what? shall we be particularious,

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monious, that have Christianity to raise our Inclinations unto all that is *Holy, and Just and Good*: I was indeed very glad, when I read in Dr. *Willet*, That since the Reformation, in one threescore years there was in only Three Cities of *England*, no less than a million of Money openly and visibly Expended in *Pious Uses*; besides what was done more secretly among them. So far has the Liberality of *Papery* been Exceeded by the Protestants. But we that pretend to be the best Mead'd, and most Refined Protestants, ought certainly to exceed all others, in the *Sacrifices which God is well pleased with*. To have done.

First, I have only this one Counsel to Subjoyn unto all the Premites; 'Tis this,

Let us not imagine that the *Pious Uses* of our Estates, Deserve any Good at the Hands of the Holy God; but Let us Depend upon the Lord Jesus Christ alone for Our and Their Acceptance with Him. When some told the Dying *Herbert* of his many Good Works, he repl'd, *yes, These are Good Works, if sprinkled with the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.* When we have done our best, Let us be sensible of that in Luke 17. 10. *We are*

OF CHRISTIANITY 33

are Unprofitable Servants. One of the most Liberal men that ever was in the World, would say, *I have often turn'd over my Accounts, but I could never find the Great God charg'd a Debtor there.* So Let us think, and place the whole Repose and Solace of our Souls, in the Merits of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But is there not Secondly, sad cause of Reproof, to too too many in the midst of us?

Many there are, That squander away a vast deal of their Estates, in Profane, Wicked, VVretched Uses; and in the pleasing of some Lust or other; but as to Pious Uses they do Little or Nothing at all; No, they make an hideous gambling at all that should go that way, and tell as much Heart blood as Money, going from them. Yea, I have heard this Assertion Demonstrated, That what is needlessly Expended at the Taverns, in many Towns, would abundantly Defray all the Publick Charges of Church and School, and Common wealth too, which the Towns would be happier, if they were honester, in the payment of. Here, surely are persons that Forget that Proverb, in Prov. 11. 24. *He that worketh more than is meet, cometh to Poverty.*

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Poverty. And they *despise* that Threatning, in *Jam. 2. 13.* He shall have Judgment without Mercy, that shewed no Mercy. How Unlike are these to the *VVidow*, whose Two *Mites*, went into the Holy Treasury? Or to the *Martyrs*, *VVisebeart* and *Rogers*, who would forbear One *Meal* in Three, for the Relieving of such as wanted Food? Or to that *Noble*, and *VVorthy English General*, of whom 'tis noted, He never thoughts be bad any thing, but what he Gave away.

But I break off. I pray God, that none of you, who are called, *Christians*, being thus Adstressed, may imitate those Hearers of the Lord Jesu Christ; of whom 'tis reported, in *Luke 16. 14.* They who were Covetous, beard all these Things, and they Despised Him!

F I N I S.

Plaud dubie in Cœlum substantia perirenit illa.
Quæ Christo collata datur, sub paupere forma.
Quæ Damnis Augmenta capit, quæ Spargitur,
 ut sit;
Quæ perit ut manat, ouæ vitam mortua
 præstat.

Sedulius.

Nunquam deficient Charites, cum dantur
 babentur:
Cumque absumuntur, multiplicantur Opes.

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